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From: Om Dhungel

Sent: Friday, August 16, 2002 8:56 AM

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Subject: Submission on Australia's migration and temporary entry program  
for skilled labour

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Mr. Richard Selth  
Secretary, Joint Standing Committee on Migration  
Parliament House, Canberra ACT 2600  
jscm@aph.gov.au <mailto:jscm@aph.gov.au>

Dear Mr. Selth,

Sub: Australia's migration and temporary entry program for skilled labour

I would like to thank the Joint Committee on Migration for giving me an opportunity to make a submission on this very important issue of Australia's migration and temporary entry program for skilled labour. Although the issue is of great interest to me, I could not do enough research and consultation due to prior commitments to make a detail submission. However, briefly I am putting forward the following points relevant to the terms of reference:

- \* Immigration policy should be part of the broader long-term population policy.
- \* Adopt a two-pronged strategy
  - To address the immediate need of specific skills required in the country
  - Encourage highly qualified / skilled migrants who can contribute to research and development and ultimately contributing to long-term benefits
- \* Need to bridge the "Missing Link". Government issues permanent resident visas to skilled migrants aimed at reducing the shortage of certain skills that are in demand. However, due to a number of barriers, migrants find it very difficult to find work in their own profession and land up doing all sorts of odd jobs.
- \* Need to do a research / study on the status of skilled migrants to find out what percentage of them are actually working in their own professional area.
- \* Matching of Skills in Demand (in keeping with market demand) and skills considered for migration should be a continuous process. It should also be more specific. For example, Information Technology (IT) is too broad a skill and has been grossly misused for migration purpose. Although, I haven't carried out any survey or study, to my knowledge, a vast majority of skilled migrants who were granted permanent residence as IT professional in the recent past are in jobs that have no relation to IT.
- \* There should be initiatives at the highest level to educate the private sector on the benefits that skilled migrants bring.
- \* Some of the current initiatives such as the Skilled Migrant Placement Program (SMPP) and Skillmax programs are useful to gain employment particularly in the public sector. However, these programs should also be broadened to cater to a larger group. These are also little known in the community. Initial induction under the SMPP should form part of the settlement program for skilled migrants.
- \* To overcome the overcrowding of cities, there need to be regional initiatives. Regional settlements of skilled migrants should be seriously explored and implemented.

I hope the Joint Standing Committee will consider the above issues while formulating its recommendations.

Yours Sincerely,

Om Dhungel